

son first ordered Gunnarsson released, upon discovering the fraudulent nature of the evidence cooked up by Holmer. After this, Holmer wanted Svensson sacked.

Svensson continued restraining Holmer's efforts to conduct innumerable meaningless witness encounters with Gunnarsson, including "witnesses" who declared they had never seen the face of the person to be identified. An enraged Holmer then had Justice Minister Sten Wickbom—through his undersecretary—get National Chief Prosecutor Magnus Sjöberg to overrule Svensson in favor of Holmer.

Sources in the prosecutor's office report that Holmer then decided to get Svensson fired, before he could officially put an end to the Gunnarsson investigation, something which Svensson had planned to announce during the week of May 20. News of this attempt by Holmer reached Svensson on May 16, prompting Svensson to move preemptively the same day to end the Gunnarsson track, denounce Holmer's methods, and resign in protest.

Investigate Svensson's charges

Visibly caught off-guard, Holmer himself, as well as Wickbom and Sjöberg, refused comment, as Gunnarsson's lawyer called for all three to resign. After regaining its composure, the government announced that it would immediately appoint a commission of inquiry, which had been planned for this fall, and Sweden's chancellor of justice—the highest judicial official of the country, empowered to sue judges and other high public officials—said he would investigate Svensson's charges.

Several police sources characterized Svensson's move as a total collapse of the investigation. "It is the wrong man who is leaving. Holmer instead ought to have left the leadership job," a highly placed police source said. "Among individual police officials participating in the investigation, Svensson enjoys a lot of confidence. He is a very competent jurist. And he is honest."

Concerning Hans Holmer, several leading investigators from the very start have been strongly critical of his way of interfering with the work. "His way of interfering with things has done incredible damage to the investigation," one police source said. Noting how Holmer personally committed himself to the view that Gunnarsson was the murderer, one source said: "He refused to accept the view of the investigators that suspicion against [Gunnarsson] was being weakened."

Replacing Svensson as prosecutor in charge of the case will be his immediate superior, Stockholm High Prosecutor Claes Zeime, who is the boss of the Stockholm Office of the Public Prosecutor, and is considered "more reliable" by the regime. Asked by media what makes him so sure he will not have the same "cooperation difficulties" with Holmer as Svensson did, Zeime replied: "I have been the chief of this office for seven years. During that time, I have been in touch continuously with Hans Holmer. We know each other well and have so far never had a quarrel."

Zeime admitted that his taking charge had already been

decided upon on May 12—four days before Svensson resigned—and announced that Svensson's decision to end the investigation of Gunnarsson is not unchangeable: "If new preconditions are added, nothing prevents me from ordering a new arrest."

Fact Sheet

Police chief assailed for political tampering

In a six-page press release May 20, Stockholm Chief Prosecutor K. G. Svensson systematically shows how the police evidence against Gunnarsson does not stand up to rigorous examination:

- **Police evidence 1)** Gunnarsson had been seen, on two separate occasions, near the scene of the crime, behaving suspiciously.

Svensson shows how the witnesses, a taxi driver and two women, had all been shown photographs of Gunnarsson by the police before the encounters were conducted which led them to identify him. In the case of the taxi driver, the oral police briefing of Svensson, which led him to decide on March 17 to press charges against Gunnarsson, was "incomplete and misleading, due to serious mistakes in the work of the police."

Contrary to the Rules of Court, the encounter between Gunnarsson and the taxi driver was conducted unbeknownst to Svensson, and, despite language problems, without employing an interpreter. The taxi driver was also asked leading questions.

After discovering all this on the morning of March 19, Svensson withdrew the charges against Gunnarsson, and ordered him released immediately. This interrupted a wave of international slanders trying to implicate the European Labor Party (EAP) in the Palme murder, based on Gunnarsson's alleged affiliation with the EAP.

- **Police evidence 2)** Literature seized from Gunnarsson showed his hostility to Palme.

This represents no basis for prosecution, Svensson points out.

- **Police evidence 3)** Statements by Gunnarsson about Palme being on the "death list," etc.

According to the police briefing to Svensson, one witness had heard Gunnarsson say by phone that Palme is on the death list, and that blood will flow in the streets of Stockholm. When Svensson finally got the transcript of this testimony, it rather showed Gunnarsson warning that *the Russians will kill Palme!*

The witness told the police: "Then the 33-year-old spoke

of some men who apparently were Russian or communist who had met someone whose name was AB and who is said to be a preacher. And the preacher had attacked the men and therefore he was on the death list. And Palme was all too conservative in the eyes of the Russians so they will get rid of him first. And there will be a bloodbath. Blood will flow in the streets of Stockholm."

• **Police evidence 4)** Particles of detonator powder from ammunition found on the jacket of Gunnarsson.

Svensson notes that of the two particles of detonator powder found on the jacket, one is certainly not from the kind of ammunition (Winchester) that is assumed to have been used in the murder, while the other particle possibly could be, but could just as well be from some other kind. The jacket is six to seven years old, and had been lent to other people. The particles found don't even prove that Gunnarsson has ever fired a gun, much less the gun that killed Palme.

• **Police evidence 5.** Encounters between Gunnarsson and various witnesses.

Encounters have been conducted with no fewer than 55 "witnesses," none of whom has been able to identify Gunnarsson. Palme's wife Lisbeth has described the clothes of the killer in a way which doesn't agree with how Gunnarsson was dressed. Svensson also reveals that yet another witness

was shown pictures of Gunnarsson before the encounter with him.

• **Police evidence 6)** Statements by Gunnarsson himself during his interrogation.

Gunnarsson had described his own whereabouts the night of the murder, including a cafe and two cinemas. There are some indications, from witnesses, that support his version—and it has in no way been proven false. "According to Swedish law," Svensson writes sarcastically, "it is not up to a suspect to prove himself innocent by providing a 100% alibi, but it is up to the prosecutor to prove the suspect guilty."

In a personal addendum to the release, Svensson writes:

"Finally, I want to state the following, about the role of the prosecutor in the investigation. [Gunnarsson] could have been removed much earlier from the murder investigation, had not the leadership group [under Holmer] in the Palme case, through interference into the preliminary investigation's leadership [Svensson's office] actions in various directions, and attempts to exert pressure on the prosecutor through various channels, disrupted and prevented rational work from the side of the prosecutor. In my view, [Gunnarsson] has been subject to grave violation of his rights. It is not up to me to make any further statements here as to the question of responsibility."

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